

# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

*Office of the Governor*

**James S. Gilmore, III**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Governor**

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## GOVERNOR GILMORE ANNOUNCES CASE AGAINST CENTRAL STATE HOSPITAL DISMISSED

RICHMOND --Governor Jim Gilmore today announced that the Commonwealth and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) will file with the U.S. District Court in Alexandria a joint motion to dismiss the case against Central State Hospital in Petersburg. DOJ initiated an investigation of the 300 bed state operated mental health facility in 1997 under the federal Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act.

"The joint dismissal today puts Central State Hospital in the forefront nationally of providing quality behavioral health care for Virginia's citizens," said Governor Gilmore. "I am proud of the hard work and dedication of the staff at Central State. They deserve high praise for providing the leadership to meet the DOJ requirements and improve the quality of patient care at this facility."

Expert reviewers last inspected the facility for the Department of Justice the week of May 14-18, 2001. Warren A. Olson, M.D., Professor, University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics, recognized the substantial improvement in "the quality of patient care and treatment most especially for the high risk patients that this facility serves."

"It is my opinion that Central State Hospital is now in the vanguard of treatment facilities nationally for these special patient populations," Dr. Olson said.

The reviewers commended the staff for the development of treatment mall programs in which 100 percent of the patients are involved on a daily basis, and for the dramatic improvements in the management of aggressive and difficult to treat patients. They praised the leadership for recruitment and retention of professional staff, for treatment team planning and training, and for sophisticated discharge planning that has good linkages to community services boards and community residences. They singled out the psychopharmacology consult services team developed last year as contributing to improvements in overall medical care and medication practices.

"Central State Hospital staff have earned the right to be proud of their accomplishments," said Jane Ryan, RN, MN, CNAA, who reviewed medical and nursing services.

The hospital provides care for patients who are civilly committed by the courts, as well as patients with mental illness who have criminal charges. Today's announcement comes on the heels of the same court's dismissal of the case against the Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute, located in Falls Church, in July of this year. Cases against the Northern Virginia Training Center in Fairfax and Eastern State Hospital in Williamsburg were dismissed in June, 1998, and March, 1999, respectively.

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